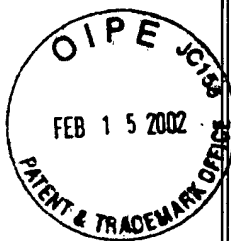


1743 #2  
2/00 RT  
02-25-02

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE



IN RE APPLN. OF: TAFT

SERIAL NO.: 10/029,658

FILED: December 20, 2001

FOR: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PREPARING TISSUE ...

DOCKET: VMS 01.01

Assistant Commissioner of Patents & Trademarks  
Washington, D.C. 20231

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Technology Center 2100

**PRIOR ART DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**

Dear Sir:

In connection with the above-entitled matter, Applicant hereby attaches U.S. Patent Office Form PTO-1449, including copies of the prior art references listed therein. Some of these references are discussed in the specification. The claims in the present Application are believed to be patentably distinguished over these references.

This Prior Art Disclosure Statement is being made pursuant to the duty of disclosure imposed by law and formulated in 37 CFR 1.56(A). No representation is made that the information thus disclosed in fact constitutes prior art or that it is the closest prior art, inasmuch as 37 CFR 1.56(A) relies on a materiality concept which depends on subjectivity.

The enclosed Prior Art Disclosure Statement is being submitted within three (3) months of the filing date. Therefore, we believe that there are no fees involved with this Prior Art Disclosure Statement. However, in the event there are any fees payable, please charge them to our Deposit Account No. 08-1391.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Norman P. Soloway".

Norman P. Soloway  
Attorney for Applicant  
Reg. No. 24,315

**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231 on February 8, 2002 at Tucson, Arizona.

By A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Diana Carr".

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<b>INFORMATION DISCLOSURE CITATION</b> <i>(Use several sheets if necessary)</i>				Docket Number (Optional) <b>VMS 01.01</b>		Application Number <b>10/029,658</b>	
				Applicant(s) <b>TAFT</b>			
				Filing Date <b>DECEMBER 20, 2001</b>		Group Art Unit	
<b>U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS</b>							
*EXAMINER INITIAL	REF	DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	NAME	CLASS	SUBCLASS	FILING DATE IF APPROPRIATE
		3,982,862	09/28/76	PICKETT ET AL.			
		4,557,903	12/10/85	MCCORMICK			
		4,801,553	01/31/89	OWEN ET AL.			
		5,080,869	01/14/92	MCCORMICK			
		5,432,056	07/11/95	HARTMAN ET AL.			
		5,560,956	10/01/96	SCHMEHL			
		5,665,398	09/09/97	MCCORMICK			
		5,843,700	12/01/98	KERROD ET AL.			
		5,928,934	07/27/99	MCCORMICK			
		6,017,476	01/25/00	RENSHAW			
<b>FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS</b>							
	REF	DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	COUNTRY	CLASS	SUBCLASS	Translation YES      NO
<b>OTHER DOCUMENTS</b> <i>(Including Author, Title, Date, Pertinent Pages, Etc.)</i>							
<b>EXAMINER</b>				<b>DATE CONSIDERED</b>			
<b>EXAMINER:</b> Initial if citation considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP Section 609; Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.							